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ACTION FOR PEACE

12th DECEMBER 1963 No. 11

In this issue -

NATIONAL SECRETARY GAOLED

RUISLIP EASTER '64

PAT ARROWSMITH'S CHALLENGE

COMMITTEE OF 100
LONDON BULLETIN

Committee meeting/Committee meeting/Committee meeting/Committee meeting/
Sunday December 8th 1963

RUISLIP

ACTION FOR PEACE

EASTER '64

ACTION FOR LIFE

This project is now under way. The Committee meeting last Sunday decided by an overwhelming majority to go ahead with a major demonstration at Ruislip U.S.A.F. Base next Easter.....

We shall:

march to the Base, on Good Friday and Easter Saturday, 1964.....

reclaim the Base, on Easter Saturday, 1964.....

RUISLIP is the administrative centre and supply depot for U.S.A.F. here.

WE SHALL RECLAIM the clothing, the blankets, the supplies, for the needy.
WE SHALL RECLAIM the buildings for the community.
WE SHALL RECLAIM the land, for a park, for farming.
WE SHALL EXPOSE the official secrets, the U.S.A.F. Records.

For all..... march

For those who will..... reclamation

For those who are with us..... obstruction

This will be the Committee's major action for the next few months. We all have a part in it. Leaflets, badges, WORK, will soon be ready for you!

LONDON COMMITTEE OF 100.....

Action for Peace.....

ACTION FOR LIFE

RUISLIP

EASTER '64

LETTER FROM BRIXTON

Extract from letter from Peter Moule, dated 3 - 12 - 63.

Many thanks to those who gave support last night (Monday). I did not actually hear anything myself as I spent quite a time in Reception, but it was "reported" to me. There is no lack of potential support in these places! I also saw you (Brenda), George (Clark) and Julian (Banyard) outside when I arrived, but was restrained from attracting your attention.

I hope the verdict will have helped Terry, he should be able to "capitalise" on it. It will be difficult for him to decide what to do in the present circumstances as, assuming a trial, a conviction seems to be beyond doubt....Next time presumably we just walk away from a demonstration and let a riot develop.

I will, unfortunately, be missing the debates re. Easter, also the planning. All I can say is that I think London should alter the date for its proposal and not hold it at Easter, giving full support to a "Washington" type affair on Easter Monday. Venue for Whitsun should be settled fairly soon and announced, and then have a well-developed phased campaign leading up to it, intensifying from Easter Monday onwards. At least I shall be free for Easter!

Reception is still the same dismal experience, although they have painted the place since I was last here....

Greetings to all, please tell them my first date of release is 21st February 1964, up to 1st April 1964. Meantime, I am working in the Library .....(Peter was refusing to work in prison unless the work offered would have social value or use to the community).

(Since reveiving the above letter, it has been learned that Peter has lodged an appeal against conviction. He is in F wing of the prison, in a single cell, being allowed vegetarian diet and being treated relatively well. B.J.)

FREEDOM ON TRIAL

The Jury found Peter Moule not guilty of conspiring to cause a public nuisance during the Greek demonstrations in July this year and not guilty of causing a public nuisance by leading a march to Claridges, which is hardly surprising as he was not there at the time. A policeman admitted in court, under oath, that he heard Terry Chandler say "Take over, Peter" and handed him a loudhailer, and he admitted that there was a bearded man at the front of the march; but he also admitted that it was a week later that he amended his notes and presumed that the bearded man and the Peter referred to must have been the same person, and again presumed it was Peter Moule. Surely it is now time that the public who allow themselves to be judges of other men's actions realised that policemen are not the infallible breed of men we would wish them to be - that they

can make mistakes, tell lies, become embittered, grow hatreds and commit actions in accordance with these strong feelings, just the same as any other human beings; and that because a man has been accused of some act, it does not automatically follow that he is "guilty" of that "crime" and that he is a liar, directly he is singled out for his action by the police. In this particular case, to my mind, it was impossible for the jury to come to their decision of "guilty", beyond all possible doubt, on the evidence presented to them. How can any man ever pass such judgement on another man's actions when no-one ever knows every single fact concerned with an action Only in a theoretical situation where every component factor is known can such a decision be made, should those concerned with making this decision wish to judge another man's action, of course. The jury heard the stories of policemen, they heard Peter Moule's evidence itself; because it was felt by defence counsel that this evidence was strong enough in itself no witnesses to the evidence given by Peter Moule were called. This may have been a mistaken judgement. In my view, it is impossible for any jury man to have come to a decision of "guilty" on the evidence produced. Keeping in mind that a man does not have to prove his innocence, it is for the prsecution to prove his guilt, a very large margin of doubt should have entered the minds of those 10 men and 2 women as to what the evidence of those not-called witnesses would have been.

Peter Moule seems to have been sent to prison for four months, not because he incited people to cause a public nuisance, or that he, amongst all the hundreds of other people present at the time, caused a public nuisance himself alone, but because he tried to stop people in that terrifying situation from panicking and turning an angry crowd into a riot. On the strength of the Judge's biased summing up it would appear that the deciding factor was that Peter wilfully caused a nuisance, because he did not get up when requested to, and did not voluntarily walk to the police tender. The sentence seems incredible in the circumstances.

The decision of the jury on the conspiracy charges should make it very difficult for a different verdict to be brought in Terry Chandler's case, also the fact that as Peter was "not guilty" of causing a public nuisance on the Thursday, Terry could not have "incited" him very convincingly.

Whatever the outcome of these Trials much progress has been acheived by the holding of the Greek demonstrations in July. The Greek Government fell, political prisoners have been released and the Government's attitude there changed; an enquiry into West End Central, the "brick" cases and enquiries, the number of people suddenly aware of their very limited freedom of speech and "civil rights", and, very important, the Home Office and the Police have been made to look pretty silly by the refusal of the public and the Committee to accept the gravity of their charges as serious, and the breakdown of their "clear the streets of demonstrators" policy. Perhaps now the general public in this country will realise just how little this country has freedom and democracy and just how much corruption there is in its institutions.

Brenda Jordan-Moule.

COMMENTS

What is our public image? What do the public think of the people who take part in our demonstrations? The main thing is, do they identify themselves with the demonstrators? On a number of occasions in the past, although many members of the public have held views in sympathy with us, they have either not given us their support, or have come out in opposition. Many independent observers consider that this may be due to the behaviour, dress and attitude of demonstrators, bearing in mind the age-old maxim, "an organisation is judged by its members".

It is not suggested for a minute that we should be so dogmatic as to bar, for example, anyone with a beard from taking part in demonstrations, as occurred on one occasion. However, it is considered that those participating in demonstrations should adhere to a code of discipline in respect of conduct, and understand the need for everyday dress. We must at all times remember that the eyes of many would-be supporters are on those participating in demonstrations, and that their actions must not only be sincere and responsible, but must be seen to be so, thus enabling the public to identify themselves with the demonstrators, and the aims and principles for which they are fighting.

Bill Floyd.

The main aim of demonstrations should be to campaign against weapons of mass destruction and this objective should always be made crystal clear. At the same time no opportunity should be lost to relate demonstrations to the issues of war, social injustice and the under-privileged everywhere.

I think that leaflets, briefing instructions, etc. should not be signed by individuals. They should always be published by the Committee of 100, so as to avoid victimisation of individuals.

Thorough briefing of supporters should be the aim - in order to avoid the necessity of individuals taking the lead and laying themselves open to charges of "incitement" etc. Another way of spreading the risk of the incitement charge would be for all demonstrators to incite each other in a clear and obvious way. This might become habitual in the way that wearing the N.D. badge has.

Finally more use should be made of the simple poster parade - it is cheap, effective and almost always permitted by authority.

David Laing.

LETTERS FROM AMERICA

These examples of the way our friends in America see things are mostly taken from the "POLARIS ACTION BULLETIN", bulletin of the New England Committee for Non-Violent Action.....

A CALL TO YOUTH EVERYWHERE

written by Bill Henry while in New Haven Jail

Does youth dare to practice the idealism of non-violence?

Ideas are on the march. Forces are abroad whose time has come. Youth are the receptacles of these ideas. They are able to bring unjust orders to an end. The past years have seen the passing away of the silent generation. Today the white-cloaked phantom of race prejudice fears for its existence as never before. It joins with the other forces of darkness to stave off its own annihilation. "Error is wounded: it writhes with pain."

Youth leads in the battle because it is naive enough, inexperienced enough, to dare to superimpose starry-eyed ideals upon the facts of cold reality. Youth is prepared to give itself for truth because it has not yet been bribed by wealth, comfort, fear and social pressure. Youth leads because it has only itself to give and so is able to give all. Youth is still tender to the injuries of injustice.

Around the world youthful idealists have grasped that complex of ideas which alone is able to keep civilisation afloat. Today's whispering breeze of non-violence is "twice blest". It blesses him against whom it is used as well as he who uses it. The power of non-violence is the ideal way, the loving way, the courageous way, the Christian way, and the truly effective way to oppose evil.

Men are born into a world containing both good and evil. In such a world life has a purpose. In such a world man is born into a struggle. In such a situation man can cease to struggle only at the risk of not having really lived. It is for this reason that bodies are created; it is for this reason that men are born: that they might seek out the truth and bear witness to it. Youth consciously and unconsciously bring new meaning into their lives as they present their bodies and their actions in efforts to achieve truth and justice. Gradully they learn that it is in heroism that life's mystery is hidden.

Youth is willing to "live dangerously" and to answer the cry for heroes

in the moral and spiritual realm. Youth, who do not divorce their beliefs from their actions, are in prisons today to achieve racial justice and universal disarmament. When others join them in fearless action the two greatest evils in our world can be defeated.

"There is one man in the world and his name is all men"; there is one religion in the world and its name is truth. Youth is able to rally to the support of this man and his religion. It proves itself able to produce the incredible effort which truth demands. The truly dedicated youth shows that he is not deterred by discomfort and annoyance, hunger and wet, pain and cold, squalor and filth, depth upon depth of exertion, or even death. He discovers new energy and power and life more abundantly as he participates in the strenuous life of nonviolence. The soul truly dedicated to non-violence can be unbribed and truly free from material things. Such a youth can pave his way by what he is and what he does rather than by what he has. He is prepared to fling away his life as witness for truth, for he is the moral fighting man.

God offers every man the choice between truth and repose, but he cannot choose both. He who chooses repose may get comfort, ease , luxury and affluence, but he closes the door to truth. He who really chooses truth finds insecurity, challenge, truth, crisis, adventure and life more abundant. "Youth, sow in yourselves the seed of non-violence, then 'sow yourselves, sow the living part of yourselves in the furrow of life.'"

PRISON

A prison is a small society within a larger society. The larger society is the matrix and cause of the smaller society. Cultures are able to exist and have existed without prisons or their equivalent. Prisons in the present age, the best and the worst alike, are primarily institutions for punishment. This is true of any prison which quarantines its members from society.

The prison society is an epitome of tyranny and serfdom. Those who know a little bit about tyranny know that in such a system it is not only the oppressed who are humiliated and degraded; it is also the oppressors. The oppressed are degraded as they are caged and alienated. The oppressors are degraded as they develop personal habits of scorn, insensitivity and hardness. These qualities are necessary for them to carry out their job.

Recently in Danbury Federal Correctional Institution, I was carrying out a five-day hunger strike in protest of prison conditions. At each mealtime, food was brought to my cell and orders were given that the food remain there until the next mealtime if it was not eaten. At the same time the prison exployee who was orderly stated, "It does not matter to

us if you don't eat. You can starve for all we care." This remark did not develop because the employee did not like me. It developed because the man felt obligated to fulfil his distasteful occupation even though it meant giving up some of his humanity.

Imprisoned people are taught at least two things by society. They are taught that it is acceptable for some men to humiliate others, and they are taught that their own individual human worth is insignificant. The prison teaches this. Fortunate are those who do not learn it. The prisoner reacts as Shylock reacted in the "Merchant of Venice." He says "The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction." When such an individual is released from prison, he sets out to better the instruction. He has learned that it is acceptable to humiliate others in order to achieve what he wants and that his life is so unimportant that it can be risked for paltry purposes. When he applies his education he is again rejected by society and placed in quarantine from society.

A prison system multiplies evil. Does anyone deny this? To submit to degradation or to co-operate with it is to support evil. For these reasons I choose, to the limits of my abilities and strength, not to submit to the degradation of the prison system.

/Written before Bill entered Danbury to serve two 12 month sentences.

POEM

I could not put on my own handcuffs
Nor could I voluntarily cage myself in a cement cell....
....so I was dragged.

And how could I accept their food
If it were encased by a system which deprived me of the
Nourishment of freedom?
....so I did not eat.

And the more aware I became of the enslavement
The greater strength I acquired to free myself.

And when they took away the superficial warmth of our blankets
We huddled together on the cold concrete
Surrounded by a greater warmth of sharing and solidarity.

They could do nothing more.
We asked for nothing,
expected nothing,
questioned them not.

WE were their questions....

Some allowed themselves to 'see' us,
Some did not, ...some saw only a little.

But only by laying ourselves bare,
By ridding ourselves of all except 'us',
Were they able to see our hearts....
and respond with theirs.

And our bodies were set free.

And yes, that superficial sunshine feels so good!!

NON-VIOLENT ACTION

A series of study-group meetings on this subject are being held in Hampstead, organised by the Hampstead Working Group. The first meeting on December 10th discussed "Non-Violent Conduct on Demonstrations".

For details of dates and speakers in the New Year contact:

Emma Weighill, 99 Southill Park, N.W.3. BRU 7219 (day).

Peter is in prison - but Terry is still to be tried. For full court reports each day, sent to you to arrive by first post on the date of publication, take out a subscription to the COURT CIRCULAR.

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LETTER TO THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE

Dear Sir.

This is to inform you that I do not intend to pay either the 40/- fine or the £25 costs awarded against me by you last March in the case of myself versus Stanley Jenkins.

The fact that I was arrested at all and charged with obstruction after being one speaker at an open-air meeting held in a regular meeting place was a gross miscarriage of justice.

"To obstruct" is a transitive verb in grammar. In British law it apparently is not, since nothing whatever was in fact obstructed during the course of this meeting. I do not, therefore, consider myself guilty of obstruction and if, according to law, I was, then the law should be challenged and changed otherwise it will remain open to grave abuse by the authorities.

I was astounded by your inequity in awarding £25 costs against me although I had received legal aid with a Nil contribution certificate to pursue my appeal. This, I understand, was quite unprecedented procedure on your part in such a case. Furthermore, I was out of work and earning no wages at all at the time when you imposed these costs.

Such deplorable injustice will receive no co-operation from me. If as a result I am imprisoned I shall continue to with-hold my co-operation and shall refuse to do any work for the period of my sentence.

Yours faithfully,
Pat Arrowsmith.

.....The above letter was sent by Pat Arrowsmith to the Lord Chief Justice of England. There has not been any response from him as yet. During the hearing of the case it was said that Pat was addressing a meeting of about two hundred dockers in Nelson St., Liverpool, in April 1962. During the evidence given both police and defence witnesses agreed that the place at which the meeting was held was a popular meeting ground. Many larger meetings had been held at this spot and the speakers had included Mrs. Braddock and Harold Wilson. They were not arrested. A Liverpool Justice of the Peace was among many witnesses who stated that the meeting did not cause any obstruction. The other speakers at the meeting were not interfered with but Pat was selected out and charged with causing an obstruction. Her appeals to the Quarter Sessions and the High Court were dismissed and an extra £25 costs were put on.

This is yet another example of our drift towards a police state. It is now established that meetings held in the streets can be declared illegal at the whim of the police.

One would have thought that the recent exposure of police delinquency in cases such as Challenors Bricks,etc. would make clear the need to relieve the police of their excessive powers. Predictably this is not the case. Instead we see a Police Bill which is intended to keep the handling of complaints against the police in the hands of the police. Slipped into the Bill we see an increase in the penalty for obstructing the police (from £5 to one month). We see a statement by a prominent Judge who in effect condones the use of violence by the police to extort confessions. Nowhere do we see our "leaders" making any serious attempt to defend our liberty. Because of the nature of their power I do not believe they are likely to. It is up to us. The responsibility is ours.

Brian McGee.

London Y.C.N.D. 'ers are organising a general sales drive aimed at West End pre-Xmas crowds. Starting on 9th December until Christmas Eve, "roving" sales teams of Y.C.N.D. and (we hope) Committee supporters will be taking some of the money that will be spent in the West End this season.

This project needs as many (reasonably dressed and be-badged) people as possible to make the necessary impact. Profits to be divided proportionally between the organisations.

Now - make a date with your comrades for a night out - with a difference! For details phone N.Y.C.N.D. CLE 5292
Martin Gilbert SUN 3446

THE SYNDICALIST WORKERS' FEDERATION Conference agreed that an anti-parliamentary campaign should be embarked upon with regard to the forthcoming General Election.

Interested groups and individuals are asked to participate in an exploratory meeting on Monday 16th December, at the White Swan, Farringdon Rd. at 8 p.m. The object of the campaign should not only expose the parliamentary system, but more important still, to put forward a constructive alternative.

Secretary, S.W.F., 34 Cumberland Road, E.17.

POINTS OF INFORMATION

(with acknowledgments to Hampstead W.G.!)

----------FIELD SECRETARY. Applications are invited immediately for the post of Field Secretary to the Committee. Applicants should have a thorough knowledge of the movement and be prepared to work like slaves for a minimal wage. The work will chiefly be in connection with Ruislip --Easter '64. Please write to: The Secretary, London Committee of 100, 13 Goodwin Street, N.4.

----------SECRETARY. The post of Secretary to the Committee will fall vacant after Easter. This preliminary notice is to encourage people to start looking <u>now</u> for the right person to take over. Qualities needed are as above, <u>plus</u> a thorough knowledge of office routine, ability to negotiate with Press and Police, immense tact, energy, drive, etc. etc. The worst job in London by common consent. Applications please to the Office as above.

----------TERRY CHANDLER is expected to start his trial on Wednesday 11 December. Full details every day in the COURT CIRCULAR, 2/- 5 issues.

----------ART SHOW. Putney and Wimbledon Working Group are organising an Art Show and Sale at the Taylor's Hall, Putney High St., on Friday and Saturday 13th & 14th December. (Friday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., Sat. 5 - 10 p.m.) Paintings, Sculpture, Ceramics, Jewellery, Fabrics etc.

----------MASKED BALL. Advance notice of this function on Friday January 3rd. 1964. Organised by Hampstead Working Group, in Hampstead Town Hall, tickets probably 5/-. Spread the word!

ACTION FOR PEACE

Christmas Issue should be out within a fortnight - apologies, by the way, for the long delay in producing this one. Terry's Trial - Y.C.N.D. and Conscription - Exposé of Army conditions in Aden (no other paper dared to print it!) - etc. etc. All the news and views of the movement.

If you do not already subsribe, send in this form today:

To ACTION FOR PEACE, London Committee of 100, 13 Goodwin St., N.4.

Please send me . . . . copies for six months. I enclose . . . . (5/- per subscription post free.)

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